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**Baker-Polito Administration Celebrates \$9.3 Million in Massachusetts
Cultural Facilities Awards**

Fund has invested over \$100 million in the creative economy since 2007

NEW BEDFORD – The Baker-Polito Administration and Massachusetts Cultural Council today announced \$9.3 million in new awards from Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund (CFF), celebrating over \$100 million in total cultural sector investments since the fund was established ten years ago. An additional \$10 million in funding was included in the Baker-Polito Administration's [Fiscal Year 2018 Capital Budget Plan](#) released last week.

Governor Charlie Baker joined New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell, state Senator Mark Montigny, Massachusetts Cultural Council Chair Nina Fialkow and Executive Director Anita Walker, Bristol County state legislators, local elected officials, and cultural and tourism sector leaders to make the announcement at the newly reopened historic Seamen's Bethel and Mariners' Home in the city's Seaport Cultural District, which received a \$440,000 matching CFF grant in 2014 and an additional \$150,000 announced by Governor Baker today.

"Massachusetts and its communities share a rich history and diverse culture that benefit residents and attract visitors from around the nation and the world," **said Governor Baker.** "These investments in our communities local strengths and landmarks, drive growth in tourism, jobs and our economy across the

Commonwealth.”

Over \$100 million in CFF awards since 2007 have supported 772 building projects in the nonprofit arts, sciences and humanities, with total development costs of \$2.6 billion, driving cultural tourism, job growth, and community vitality in cities and towns across Massachusetts. Over ten years CFF-funded projects have supported 8,512 full time jobs and \$492 million in wages, employed 23,778 architects, engineers, contractors, and construction workers, and created 2,092 new permanent jobs.

“These awards help cities, towns and their nonprofit partners restore and preserve culturally and historically significant sites that provide educational opportunities to visitors and local families,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito.** “We are excited the administration can support these public and private partnerships to bolster community and economic development.”

Led by the Waterfront Historic Area League and the New Bedford Port Society, the Seamen’s Bethel project restores and preserves two of the city’s most iconic buildings, honors New Bedford’s fishermen and enhances the Whaling National Historical Park, site of one of the most beloved passages from Herman Melville’s classic American novel, “Moby Dick,” as an international visitor destination.

“Cultural tourism is a key pillar of our economic revitalization strategy,” **said Mayor Mitchell.** “We thank the Governor, Legislature, Mass Cultural Council and MassDevelopment for their confidence in our ability to deliver on that strategy to enhance economic opportunities for our residents and grow our tax base.”

“Downtown New Bedford continues to experience an immense cultural renaissance and revival of galleries, shops and restaurants,” **said Senator Montigny.** “The Seamen’s Bethel and Mariners’ Home project is an excellent example of state dollars, through the CFF, transforming and preserving history.”

[The new round of awards today](#) includes 61 capital grants totaling about \$8.9 million and another 18 planning grants totaling nearly \$400,000. Grants range from \$7,000 to \$300,000, and must be matched one-to-one from private and/or other public sources. Besides Seamen’s Bethel, new grants include:

- \$140,000 to Double Edge Theatre Productions, Inc. to turn an old farm into an artist studio and theatrical workshop in Ashfield.
- \$187,000 to Arlington Center for the Arts, Inc. to modernize a historic school building that will become its new home.
- \$225,000 to the Concord Museum to construct a new Education Center.

- \$96,000 for an outdoor Performance Pavilion on Bolton Town Common, to be used for films, concerts, theatrical performances and art festivals.
- \$125,000 to Buzzard's Bay Coalition, Inc. to rehabilitate the historic 1890 Bathhouse on Onset Beach, revitalizing coastal Wareham through environmental education programs.
- \$194,000 to Nuestras Raices in Holyoke to renovate its urban agriculture facility and performance stage.

"Today we celebrate a 10-year, public-private partnership that has strengthened one of our state's greatest assets: its arts and cultural sector," **said Anita Walker.** "We are deeply grateful to the Governor and Legislature for the sustained commitment to the Cultural Facilities Fund."

CFF grants have also helped restore many of our nation's most treasured historical and cultural landmarks. More than 18 million people visit these sites annually, nearly one third from out of state.

Grants remain highly competitive: The Fund received 131 applications in this round seeking nearly \$28 million for projects, and applicants anticipate \$377 million in capital projects over the next two years. The new allocation announced by the Governor for FY18 will ensure the Cultural Facilities Fund continues to invest in quality building projects in the arts, humanities, and sciences.

"The Cultural Facilities Fund has delivered on its original mission to support the nonprofit arts, humanities, and sciences to create jobs and new economic opportunity in the Commonwealth," **said Jay Ash, Secretary, Executive Housing and Economic Development,** and Chair of the Board of MassDevelopment, which unanimously approved the grants at its May 11 meeting.

"The Cultural Facilities Fund supports the Commonwealth's priceless cultural and historical resources, which create jobs, draw thousands of visitors to Massachusetts, and grow the state's creative economy," **said MassDevelopment President and CEO Marty Jones.** "We are grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration for its ongoing investment in the Fund, and delighted to see the what this new round of grants will make possible."

MassDevelopment and Mass Cultural Council jointly administer the CFF, and an Advisory Committee appointed by the Governor provides oversight to its operation. The grants announced today were supported with \$10 million from the state's fiscal year 2017 capital plan, authorized by the state Legislature and allocated by the Governor.

[Learn more about the CFF.](#)

About the Massachusetts Cultural Council

The Massachusetts Cultural Council is a state agency supporting the arts, humanities, and sciences to improve the quality of life in Massachusetts and its communities. The agency pursues this mission through grants, initiatives, and advocacy for nonprofit cultural organizations, schools, communities, and artists.

About MassDevelopment

MassDevelopment, the state's finance and development agency, works with businesses, nonprofits, financial institutions, and communities to stimulate economic growth across the Commonwealth. During FY2015, MassDevelopment financed or managed 294 projects generating investment of more than \$2.5 billion in the Massachusetts economy. These projects are projected to create about 6,100 jobs and build or rehabilitate about 2,000 residential units.

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